

# Annexation Element

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## GOAL:

**To annex all land within the Potential Annexation Area expeditiously.**

## OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Annexation Element is to ensure a smooth transition from county to city jurisdiction when unincorporated land is annexed to the city. The policies in this element set criteria and conditions for considering annexation proposals and establish a framework for addressing public services, infrastructure and utility extension, and compatibility issues in Bellevue's Potential Annexation Areas.

Annexation of unincorporated land adjacent to the city benefits the city, residents, and property owners. Property owners and residents gain access to urban services provided by Bellevue such as enhanced police and fire protection, building and land use controls, and storm and surface water control. They can fully participate in the local government that most directly affects their lives.

For the city, annexation yields benefits that include the ability to control new development, thereby ensuring ease of future maintenance; control of impacts at their source; and the ability to extend its boundaries in a logical, service-oriented manner. Additionally, the city gains revenues from areas that already enjoy certain city services but currently pay no taxes or fees to Bellevue.

Bellevue's Potential Annexation Area was established in an agreement reached with the cities of Issaquah and Renton in 1979. This agreement identifies a Sphere of Influence line to which these three cities will expand eventually in the Newcastle area. The Sphere of Influence line may be re-examined when certain factors such as development patterns or water, sewer, storm water, or transportation service boundaries diverge from expected directions.

For each of these cities, the area between the Sphere of Influence line and the city's current boundary is known as the Potential Annexation Area. Bellevue's area shown in Figure AN.1, ultimately will add approximately four square miles to the city.

Annexations are initiated when the City Council accepts a petition from a sufficient number of citizens or property owners within a proposed annexation area. An annexation is validated either by submission of a second property owners petition or by an election of the residents within the area proposed.

In addition to annexation policy, this element also establishes policy guidance for interjurisdictional cooperation with adjacent cities, King County, and special purpose districts.

## **POLICIES**

### **Pre-Annexation**

**POLICY AN-1.** Annex the following areas when residents or property owners request annexation: Unincorporated areas in Eastgate and the Potential Annexation Area line with Issaquah.

**POLICY AN-2.** Adjust the municipal boundaries with adjacent cities where the existing municipal boundaries create unserviceable pockets of land.

**POLICY AN-3.** Make the city's public service and utility service areas coincide with the Potential Annexation Area, wherever mutually agreeable.

**POLICY AN-4.** Establish pre-annexation zoning for the entire Potential Annexation Area, where practical.

**POLICY AN-5.** Respond to community initiatives with a full explanation of all methods of annexation, including the community council option.

**POLICY AN-6.** Extend the service area boundaries only if landowners requesting service have begun the annexation process or have made prior agreements with the city.

**POLICY AN-7.** Make every effort, whether by interlocal agreement or other mechanism, to ensure that land which lies within King County's jurisdiction, but which simultaneously lies within Bellevue's Potential Annexation Area, develops according to the Comprehensive Plan policies or other development standards the City of Bellevue has developed for these particular areas.

**POLICY AN-8.** Utilize pre-annexation agreements only if immediate annexation cannot be required or is not reasonable.

**POLICY AN-9.** Recognize the integrity of existing or future neighborhoods and the need for maintaining logical service areas as a general direction, when working with individual annexation requests.

**POLICY AN-10.** Require owners of land annexing to the city to be subject to their proportionate share of the city's bonded indebtedness.

**POLICY AN-11.** Consult affected citizens, cities, special purpose districts, and other parties prior to final approval of any annexation.

**POLICY AN-12.** Establish appropriate zoning district designations in proposed annexation areas using the following criteria:

- a. In annexation areas that are substantially developed (at least 70% of the land has been improved with permanent structures, or for which development permits have been approved or preliminary plat or PUD approval granted), City of Bellevue zoning district designations should be applied that would most nearly reflect the existing pattern and intensity of development within the annexation area.
- b. In annexation areas that are largely undeveloped (more than 30% of the land is vacant or undeveloped), City of Bellevue zoning district designations should be applied that would most nearly reflect the patterns and intensities of land use found in the Comprehensive Plan for the unincorporated county area. In the event the Comprehensive Plan does not provide guidance within the county area, the city may initiate a zoning/special district study should the area be largely undeveloped. Permanent zoning would be based on the results of the study.

## **Post-Annexation**

**POLICY AN-13.** After annexation, transfer all review authority for all land currently undergoing development review in King County to the City of Bellevue.

**POLICY AN-14.** Make every effort to ensure a smooth transition from county to city administration.

**POLICY AN-15.** Charge owners and residents of newly-annexed, fully-developed territory only the same utility upgrading costs for which current residents are responsible (excluding special improvement or benefit districts that may be created).

**POLICY AN-16.** Establish departmental service needs prior to major annexations through an impact analysis. As revenues from each annexation area are collected, increase city services to maintain current citywide services levels.

**POLICY AN-17.** Provide newly-annexed areas with the same level of service enjoyed by areas within the city, while at the same time not decreasing current citywide service levels.

**POLICY AN-18.** Coordinate all development activities between the city and King County within the Potential Annexation Area. Where possible, joint development review should occur.

## **Interjurisdictional**

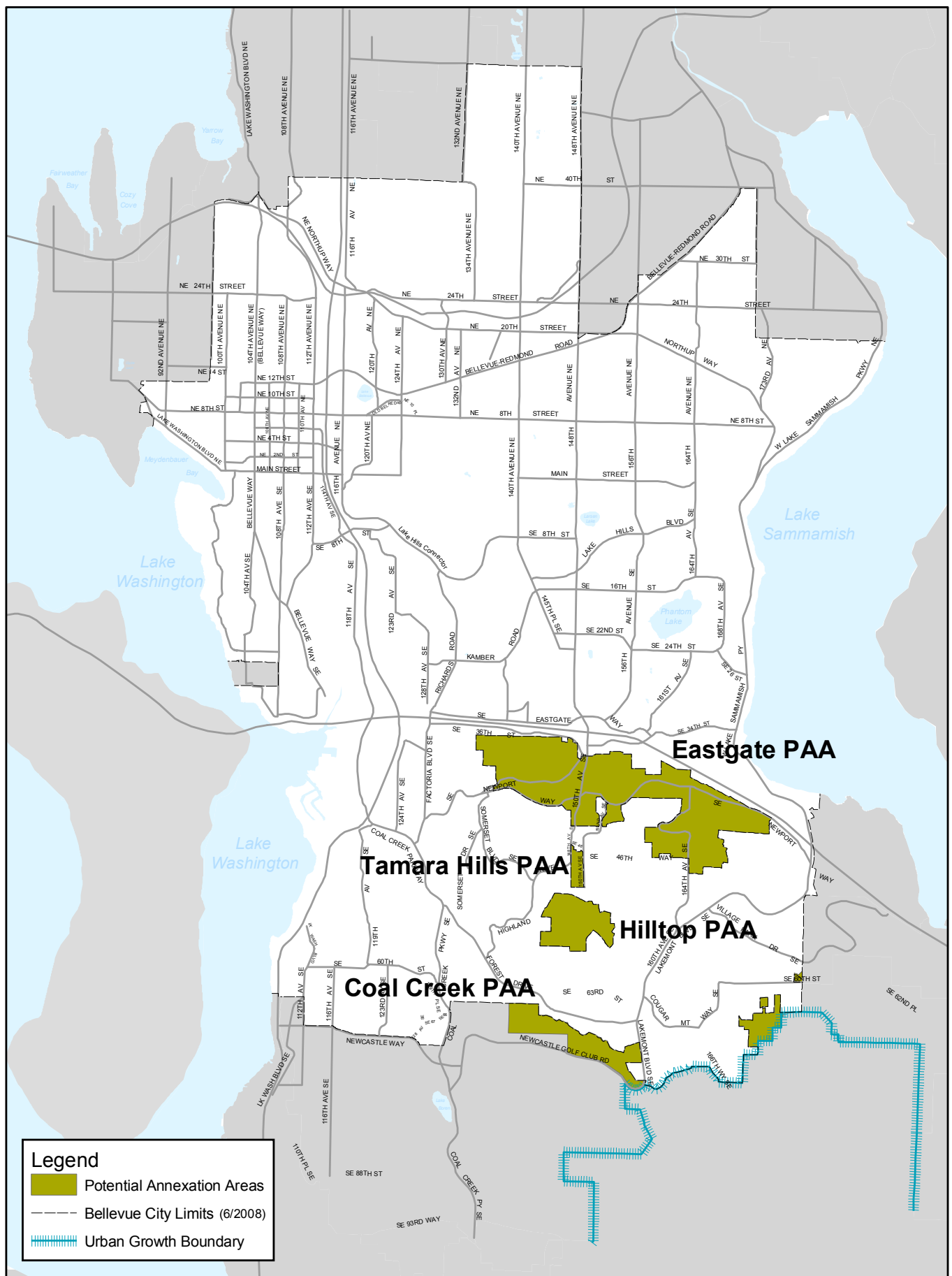
**POLICY AN-19.** Coordinate long-range planning and the development of capital improvement programs with adjacent cities, special districts, and King County.

**POLICY AN-20.** Establish interlocal agreements, when appropriate, between the City of Bellevue and other jurisdictions which address possible solutions to regional concerns, such as but not limited to, water, sanitary sewer, storm water drainage, utility drainage basins, transportation, parks and open space, development review, and public safety.

**POLICY AN-21.** Support consolidation (by mutual agreement) of those portions of special purpose service districts and King County Flood Control Districts with the city where the service district is providing service within the city's corporate boundary and where, as in the case of Water District 117, there are not major conflicts with existing subarea policies.

**POLICY AN-22.** Provide public services and/or utilities within the corporate limits of adjoining cities when there is a service agreement in effect or when such temporary service is necessary because of an emergency.

**POLICY AN-23.** Recognize existing utility agreements with adjacent cities, towns, and districts, and acknowledge the continuation of such agreements. Ensure that these agreements contain conditions which have the necessary development review authority in order to maintain acceptable service levels to those municipalities.



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